



**CITY OF SACRAMENTO
POLICE
DEPARTMENT**



**U.S. DRUG ENFORCEMENT
ADMINISTRATION**



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA**



**ATF – BUREAU OF
ALCOHOL, FIREARMS,
TOBACCO AND
EXPLOSIVES**

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NEIGHBORHOOD CRACK COCAINE DEALERS ARE TARGETS OF JOINT POLICE AND FEDERAL CRACK-DOWN

SACRAMENTO–Sacramento Police Chief Albert Najera, DEA Special Agent in Charge Javier F. Pena, United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott, and ATF Resident Agent in Charge Armando Salas, announced today the successful completion of a long-term investigation of crack cocaine dealers in the Oak Park neighborhood of Sacramento.

At the request of Sacramento Police Chief Albert Najera, a special team of the Drug Enforcement Administration, known as the Mobile Enforcement Team (MET), was deployed to the Oak Park Neighborhood of Sacramento. The DEA established the MET Initiative in April 1995 to assist local agencies and prosecutors with stopping violent criminals and organizations causing drug related violence. By working with local agencies to target organizations causing drug-related violence and to arrest key individuals for narcotics trafficking, MET has helped reduce violence in hundreds of communities across America. This MET, deployed out of the DEA's San Francisco Division, travels to geographic areas throughout Northern California. In 2002, the DEA MET conducted a highly successful operation in the Franklin Villa area of Sacramento.

In October of 2004, the MET team began working with the Sacramento Police Department, the United States Attorney's Office in Sacramento, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. The MET initiative continued through January of 2005, ending recently with a series of 58 arrests - 24 defendants were charged in federal court, while 34 were charged in state court. Of those arrests, 5 defendants were charged with federal firearms violations, resulting from the seizure of 9 firearms. The remainder were charged with Conspiracy to Distribute Controlled Substances, Distribution of Controlled Substances, or Possession with Intent to Distribute Controlled Substances. Almost all the defendants had prior felony drug convictions which, in some cases, doubles the mandatory prison sentence under federal law. Among the individuals arrested, 23 were documented gang members.

These joint enforcement efforts included the execution of 31 search warrants, 29 of which were authorized by federal judges, the others by state court judges. The officers and agents seized cocaine base, i.e., "Crack," heroin, methamphetamine, MDMA (Ecstasy), and marijuana. The majority of the drug traffickers charged were operating retail distribution sites in residential areas. These sites were frequently the subject of complaints from local residents.

"The United States Attorney's Office is committed to working with the leaders and residents of one of Sacramento's most historic neighborhoods, Oak Park, to help their community thrive. Federal authorities stand ready to assist Police Chief Najera to target hardcore offenders trafficking in drugs and guns in the region. These most recent arrests and indictments serve as testament to that fact," said Scott.

The defendants charged federally have either been indicted by a grand jury or are awaiting indictment. Many of the defendants remain incarcerated pending trial. If convicted, many of the defendants with prior convictions face a mandatory minimum 10 year prison sentence. There is no parole on federal sentences. One of the purposes of this joint endeavor is to effectively and strategically enforce drug laws in cases of individuals who have been previously convicted of similar drug trafficking crimes. By prosecuting such cases in the federal court, the time that such drug traffickers will actually serve is increased. The sentences for federal offenses are generally longer than those under state law and, unlike state court prisoners who can be released early on parole, federal prisoners serve almost the full prison term before being released and then being subjected to another several years of supervision. The charges are only allegations and the defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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